

Briefing 021/23: What pharmacy owners told us in July 2023

As part of Community Pharmacy England’s commitment to working more closely with pharmacy owners – listening to them better, as well as engaging more regularly via events and other channels – we sought input from the sector ahead of our [July 2023 Committee Meeting](#).

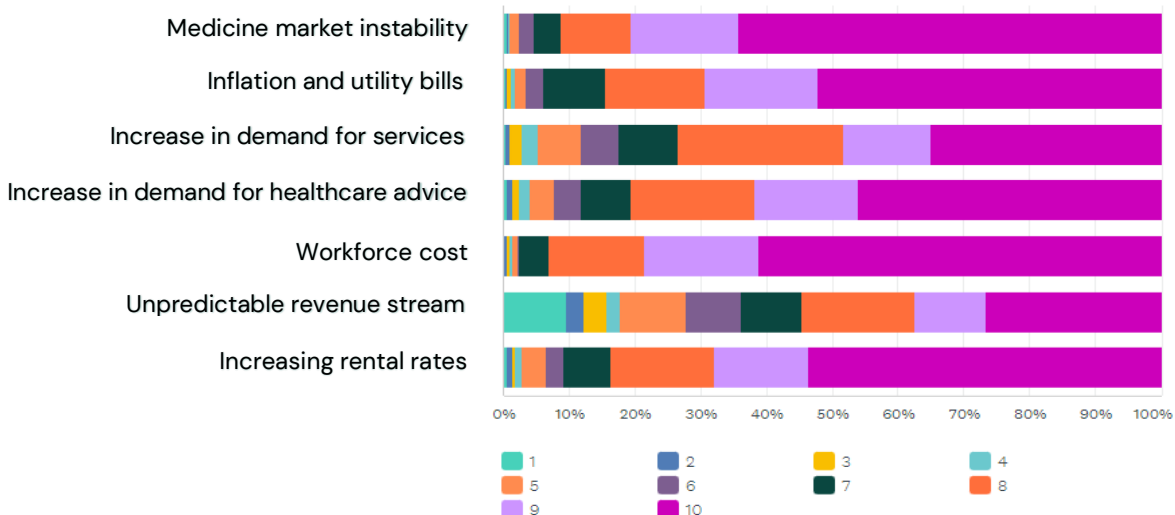
During the last two weeks of June, this first ever pre-Committee survey was conducted to gather views from all pharmacy owners on a series of topical issues. The polls focused on pharmacy finances, pressures and capacity. Whilst mostly consisting of multiple-choice questions, there was also space for respondents to add additional feedback where necessary.

Thanks to all those who took the time to complete the survey. Here we have summarised what you told us.

Opinion Poll Results

More than 850 participants from all over England engaged with our survey, giving a snapshot of thoughts from across a range of different pharmacy businesses across the country.

The results provided us with a temperature check on the key pressures facing pharmacy owners. Many of the findings came as no surprise, building on our Pressures Survey earlier in the year, showing the concerning pressures that pharmacies are feeling. Medicines supply issues, workforce challenges, and the impact of rising rents stood out as the most pressing issues. The graph below shows responses to a question asking pharmacy owners to rank financial pressures on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the highest level of pressure.





Respondents to the survey also told us:

- They had a strong appetite for expanding service provision, providing that new funding is secured; and
- There is a need for increased funding to cover the costs for Year 5 service expansion.

Using the Data

The opinion polling results were reviewed by all of our Committee Members ahead of the meeting and we had a full discussion on the results augmented with feedback from the Regional Representatives, who are all serving LPC members, as well as drawing on them throughout the meeting.

The polling input is already proving valuable in shaping our positions and increasing our leverage in the ongoing negotiations. Having analysed 17,000 words of text data, respondents have provided valuable input to both the Committee and the Community Pharmacy England policy team. Our Negotiating Team is considering how this may be used to support future negotiations as well.

We have also begun using some of the results in our influencing work – such as at our recent [Parliamentary event on medicines supply](#) – and we are looking to secure national media coverage on some of the findings.

Next Steps

Community Pharmacy England remains fully focused on finding solutions to the complex challenges facing community pharmacy businesses, and our new commitment to regular pre-Committee Meeting engagement work will serve as an important tool for temperature-checking and consultation on key issues with all community pharmacy owners.

As the first of many, the July 2023 survey will be important in the shaping of future pre-Committee Meeting polls but we will also continue to innovate the concept and create theme-based polling alongside providing other sector engagement opportunities throughout the year, looking to help us address core issues at the top of your agenda.

If you have any queries or require more information, please contact: comms.team@cpe.org.uk